

Network

UPDATE



FOR THE COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN THE NORTH-WEST

"Promoting equal citizenship, justice and equality of opportunity"

SPRING
2011

Community Development – Policy For The Ages

So we're back on the electoral merry-go-round, about to exercise our democratic rights – for which we hope responsibility will be assumed by those soon to be mandated.

The Network is a long-standing advocate of participative democracy – as a robust ally of (rather than challenge to) traditional, representative democracy. This is a message that bears repeating time and time again as the penny that sometimes drops seems to have a knack of rolling off the table or down the drain. Even more so when economic conditions take centre stage, allowing the eye to be taken off social impacts created by wholly financial perspectives or imperatives.

No-one disputes that it takes a heady mix of nerve, skill, and many other attributes to come through such public contests. But to repeat an old mantra – being elected is the start of a journey not a destination.

No matter how effective any elected member, or the machinery that supports them, there is an absolute imperative to make use of all available points of contact with what is happening on the ground, in people's lives and communities and on their quality of life. This is how effective policy is formed – working

from a continually informed evidence base gives a pretty solid base on which to make decisions, and does not automatically displace ideology.

It may come across as overly simplistic but this is essentially the community development approach. An approach that makes it possible to achieve better long-term outcomes no matter where you apply it - health & social care, housing, policing, education too, should that opportunity be taken.

As expectation grows of continuing slashes in public spending and fallout from policies on e.g. Welfare Reform, the time is right to communicate that a community development approach makes social and economic sense. The Community & Voluntary sector, instead of being treated as a point of weakest resistance, has to grow its confidence and its voice – our practice and the principles that govern this are among the main reasons this corner of the world finds itself increasingly able to move beyond the turmoil of recent generations.

Community Development makes for good policy – tell this to those knocking on your door after your vote.

Official Launch of Participation, Engagement & Skills Project

North West Community Network launched its BIG Lottery funded project PESP on 24 March 2011.

Over 70 Community & Voluntary sector colleagues (with a few from the Public Sector sneaked in) were treated to a mix of music, drama and inspirational words.

Eamonn Baker, Chair of NWCN introduced the event and, of course, the PESP team, Gabrielle Quinn and Martin McCrystal who proceeded to outline the aims of the initiative: "People and communities will be supported in becoming better informed and more closely engaged in the decisions that have a real impact on everyday life."



They explained: "We'll do this through individual mentoring, networking clusters, providing essential resources and themed training events."

The event saw the first appearance of a set of PESP "how to" guides and a schedule of workshops for the year ahead. This was informed by a needs analysis of NWCN members and the early themes for the workshops include: Managing Volunteers, Charitable Status and Promoting Your C&V group.



Well known local performer James King

and colleagues followed with an insightful and thought-provoking theatrical piece on the 'voice of the people - their struggle to be heard'.

Eamonn next introduced Guest Speaker Inez McCormack, Director of the Participation & Practice of Human Rights Project. Inez is a leading civil rights pioneer in Northern Ireland with a lifelong commitment to the equal treatment of forgotten workers, minorities and women, in particular.

Inez spoke of her particular interest in the inclusive aspect of PESP, making links between this and her experiences with PPR from which she cited examples of good as well as less useful engagement and decision-making.

Inez affirmed that groups are not 'hard to reach' but there if we look, that change should be made 'with' people rather than 'to' them. It is our responsibility to look around and see who *isn't* in the room and invite them in.

To get a copy of the "how to" guides, sign up for the first workshop (12 May) or to learn more about PESP, simply email or just call and the team will be delighted to hear from you.



PESP

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Volunteer... for a change - A guide to getting involved

Volunteering...

Is

- Giving time and energy to help others, the community or the environment.
- A great way of connecting with your local community.
- Your choice what you do and how often you do it

Is not

- A cheap substitute for paid staff. The work of volunteers adds value to the work of paid employees.
- Restricted to one activity or to one type of person.

Volunteering is for everyone!

Why Volunteer?

People often have their own reasons for volunteering, however through volunteering you can:

- Improve your health
- Meet new friends
- Develop your skills
- Try something new
- Get results
- Enjoy yourself.

What do volunteers do?

- Improve the environment
- Work with children and young people
- Help people with disabilities
- Advice work
- Support people with mental ill health

- Counselling
- Help families
- Community relations
- Help out at sports clubs
- Fundraising
- Emergency services

And so much more, give it a try!

A volunteer involving organisation should

Explain your role and responsibilities

- Provide support and supervision
- Offer training relevant to your role
- Ensure your working environment is safe
- Provide relevant insurance cover
- Reimburse out of pocket expenses
- Respect diversity and treat people fairly

Getting Started

- Visit www.volunteernow.co.uk, the online database for volunteering opportunities in Northern Ireland.
- Contact an organisation directly. You may know exactly what you want to do and who with.
- Call in to the North West Volunteer Centre for help in making the right volunteering choice depending on your needs, availability and personal circumstances – 22 Bishop Street, BT48 6PP, tel: 71271017.

Big Lunch

The third annual Big Lunch will take place on Sunday 5 June 2011. Big Lunch is the Eden Project's initiative that aims to get as many people as possible to have lunch with their neighbours once a year.

Thousands of events have taken place and nearly a million people have participated each year since the campaign launched in 2009. From small intimate affairs, to full blown street parties with bouncy castles and hog roasts, Big Lunches have been held in all

types of community around the UK. And research shows it really works; people feel closer to their neighbours as a result of The Big Lunch and many find it's just the spark that their community needed to bring people together.

To receive your free Big Lunch Starter Pack, simply register your planned event online at www.thebiglunch.com or alternatively call 0845 850 8181 to speak to one of the team. The pack contains a step-by-step guide to help you get your event off the ground, plus invitations, posters, 'crowd cooking' recipe ideas, stickers and much more.

Social Media Tips for your organisation

Posting on Facebook

Social media is essentially an online way to share content and to connect with people and organisations. It is currently the number one activity on the internet and can play a huge part in getting your organisation noticed, promoting your activities, attracting customers and volunteers and much more. The only costs associated with using these tools are human resources. The vast majority of social media tools are free to use.

- Post at least 3 times per week. By being regular in your updates you will be more likely to get noticed and grow an audience. On the other hand, try not to post more than once or twice per day as this can turn people off.
- It is important to vary the types of information that you put out. While letting people know about your own upcoming events etc. is important, constant self-promotion can be irritating. Before posting ask yourself 'does this really add value to the community? If the answer is no then reconsider posting it.
- A picture speaks a thousand words so get your camera out! Results show that posting a picture along with a comment can significantly increase the chances of a user reading a post. This is even more prevalent when it comes to using video content.
- 'Liking' other peoples posts and commenting on them when relevant, can significantly help you get noticed and also help drive traffic back towards your own page.

Using YouTube

With over two billion hits a day, YouTube can be a very effective and cheap way of letting people know about you and your organisation. Whether you are a charity, arts & crafts group, theatre a simple video uploaded on YouTube can really help promote your activities.

Below are some helpful pointers to consider when using YouTube:

- Create a Customised Channel – Your YouTube channel should match the look and feel of your brand – use the custom options to change the default settings of your YouTube page to incorporate your logo and add custom colours. Keep branding consistent across all of your social media sites.
- Upload and Organise Content – Are you creating a weekly podcast? Add some images and upload your podcast as a video. Whether you have hundreds of videos or just a few, creating a strategy and organising your content is a great project to get some help with. Don't forget the playlist option, where you can mix multiple videos into a perfect playlist.
- Engage Others – While watching a video may seem solitary, YouTube is a social site. "Favourite" videos appropriate to your business and make friends with other relevant users. Add comments to content you enjoy moderate comments on your clips, too.
- Get Tagging – Tagging content is critical. The better your videos are tagged, the more likely they are to show up in relevant searches
 - Title: Create a title that clearly uses relevant keywords from the video.
 - Description: Again, use keywords to describe the content - don't forget to add your company name and a relevant link to your website.
 - Category: Make sure that your video is classified in the best category to describe its content.
 - Tags: Use tags to help narrow down the category and get specific. Add as many tags as necessary to distinguish your video.

Funding Opportunities

Women Make Music funding opportunity

The PRS for Music Foundation has announced that Women Make Music - its unique funding opportunity for women music creators - is now open. It wants to raise the profile of women who are creating music in the UK.

Are you a woman creating and performing new music in any genre? Or an organisation commissioning a new piece of music from a woman you have not yet worked with? If so, then you may be eligible to apply for up to £5,000.

To find out more and apply online please visit:

www.prsformusicfoundation.com/women

The Percy Bilton Charity

The Percy Bilton Charity is a grant-making trust (registered charity number 1094720) and company limited by guarantee founded in 1962.

Grants are made to organisations and individuals in need throughout the U.K.

Organisations assisting disadvantaged youth, people with disabilities and older people may apply for grants towards capital expenditure. Social workers may apply on the behalf of individuals who have a disability or mental health problem, or who are over 65, for grants to purchase basic furniture, equipment and clothing.

For more detailed information about how to apply, visit www.percybiltoncharity.org.uk. Are funds low? Is your community association/group in need of funds?

Why not avail of a simple yet effective method to raise funds through textile recycling! We arrange a collection day and venue in association with you.

We collect and weigh the clothing. We pay you £600 per tonne = £6.00 per 10kg bag

Please contact Cara McPeake on 028 276 38300 or visit www.alltexrecyclers.com to find out more & get involved!

Arts Council project funding due to open

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland is open for Project Funding from 31 March 2011. This will be the only round of this fund this year.

ACNI Arts development officers will be able to help with any enquiries. www.artscouncil-ni.org/award/project_funding.htm

Charity Times Awards – open for entries

The Charity Times Awards are free to enter and open to any UK-based registered charity, or international charity with registered UK offices. The Awards are also open to corporate groups who work with charities and provide services to charity organisations. They acknowledge and encourage best practice in the management of charities and not-for-profit organisations.

The Awards are now in their twelfth year and the highly successful, popular, and growing annual gala event will be bigger and better than ever in 2011. They continue to be the

pre-eminent celebration of best practice in the UK charity and not-for-profit sector. The Awards will be held on 12 October 2011 at the prestigious Hilton Park Lane. www.charitytimes.com/awards2011

£250k innovation fund for benefits uptake

Social Development Minister, Alex Attwood, has called on organisations across NI to avail of a £250,000 Innovation Fund to encourage benefit uptake. He said: "I want to ensure that all those in Northern Ireland who qualify for benefits are getting what is rightfully theirs. Therefore I am extending the Social Security Agency's benefit uptake activities to include an Innovation Fund of £250,000."

Organisations right across NI will be invited to make applications for funding by coming up with innovative ways to encourage benefit uptake. £250,000 will be made available in the first year.

Details of the Innovation Fund, are available on the Department for Social Development website:

<http://www.dsdni.gov.uk>

Community Planning Pilot Project for Derry and Strabane District Council Areas

What is Community Planning?

Community Planning (CP) is the process where public sector organisations work in partnership with the private sector, local communities and the community and voluntary sector to identify and solve local problems, improve services and implement a shared vision for promoting the well-being of their area.

It is likely that the Northern Ireland Executive will introduce legislation making Community Planning a statutory responsibility led by the 11 new councils which are likely to be set up across Northern Ireland (possibly from 2014).

The aim of Community Planning is to make sure that people and communities are genuinely engaged in decisions made about the public services which affect them.

Pilot Projects

Three Community Planning Pilot Projects funded by BIG lottery are underway in Northern Ireland. The consortium which will deliver the pilot project in the Derry City Council and Strabane District Council areas is made up of:

- Derry City Council
- Strabane District Council,
- North West Community Network
- Strabane and District Community Network
- Groundwork Northern Ireland
- Creative Edge Consulting.

The project will focus on a District Electoral Area (DEA) in each council area. Each DEA includes a number of wards. In Derry City Council the project will focus on the Waterside DEA (an urban area). It includes the following wards:

<i>Altnagelvin</i>	<i>Caw</i>
<i>Clondermott</i>	<i>Ebrington</i>
<i>Kilfennan</i>	<i>Lisnagelvin</i>
<i>Victoria</i>	

In Strabane, the project will focus on the rural DEA of Glenelly. This area includes the following wards:

<i>Artigarvan</i>	<i>Dunnamanagh</i>
<i>Plumbridge</i>	<i>Slievekirk</i>
<i>Victoria Bridge</i>	

What will each pilot project do?

The key activities in each pilot project are summarised below:

- to establish the extent of the community and voluntary sector's understanding of Community Planning and of the Future Search exercises and regeneration plans in each council area;
- having done that, to run workshops with the community and voluntary sector in each area which raise awareness of community planning and of the Future Search exercises and regeneration plans;
- to conduct research to find out what the barriers are which make it difficult for communities to participate in Community Planning;
- to provide planning workshops for the community and voluntary sector to increase their understanding and skills;
- to work with people from the community and voluntary sector, each council, health, education, housing etc. as well as the private sector to develop a local vision, set priorities and prepare two local area plans; one for Waterside and one for Glenelly.

The pilot project will run until 31 Jan 2012.

To find out more contact:

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Derry BT48 7NN

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Critical 'Cross Border' Conversations - Seminar

9.30am Thur 14 April 2011

Ráth Mór, Bligh's Lane,
Derry~Londonderry

equality and reconciliation in the Border region?

To book email: angelaholohan@cwci.ie
OR jim@communitydialogue.org

The CWC Harnessing Equality for Lasting Peace (HELP) project and *Community Dialogue* in conjunction with *North West Community Network* hosts this seminar with guest speaker, **Dr. Chris McInerney, University of Limerick**

Chris McInerney:

Chris McInerney is a post doctoral researcher in governance, development and social inclusion. His particular interests focus on the interactions between the concepts, practices and processes of governance and social inclusion / exclusion, participatory democracy, the role of civil society in social change and the role of public administration in promoting social justice and social equity. Chris has previously worked for the United Nations Development Programme in East Timor, as national co-ordinator of the Community Workers Co-operative and as a project officer for Southern Africa with Trócaire.

For Discussion:

- How can community organisations foster better cross border co-operation in the North West region?
- Is there a need to develop coherent structures in the North West that will support collective positioning and lobbying on a cross-border basis and why?
- How could this add value to the work of social inclusion, peace building,

2nd Annual International Conference on Qualitative Research for Policy Making, 26 - 27 May 2011, Belfast

This highly interactive, cross-disciplinary conference will bring together top academics, practitioners and policy planners to discuss successful strategies of delivering qualitative research for policy making in times of austerity. The conference will consist of submitted presentations, invited speakers, brainstorming workshops as well as interactive discussion sessions. As with all our past events, this conference will provide excellent opportunities for participants to network with peers.

Topics that will be discussed and debated during the conference include:

- >Understanding policy making processes: how to engage and connect in policy environments
- >Aligning policy-making and qualitative research
- >Public policy making in divided societies
- >Converting qualitative research conclusions into actionable policy recommendations
- >Utilising qualitative software to accelerate data collection, data analysis and reporting
- >Discussing best practice on how to write,

report and disseminate qualitative research findings.

Conference presenters include:

Susan Popkin - Director, Program on Neighbourhoods - The Urban Institute (US)
Timothy Nelson - Lecturer in Social Policy - Harvard University (US)
Sara Shaw - Senior Research Fellow - Nuffield Trust (UK)
Grainne Kelly - Policy/Practice Coordinator, INCORE - University of Ulster (UK)
Sz Matebesi - Head of Sociology - University of the Free State (South Africa)
Anita Vaillancourt - Assistant Professor - Algoma University (Canada)
Aileen O'Carroll - Research Manager - IQDA (Ireland)

This two-day international conference includes refreshments and lunches on both days. Please note that this is a highly sought-after event, seats may be limited so register early to avoid disappointment, visit: www.eventbee.com/view/grpm2011 and for more information visit the event website: www.merlien.org/upcoming-events/grpm2011.html

Notice of Relocation for North-West Community Network

Along with other members of the Walled City Community Partnership, NWCN will be relocating from its current premises at 10-12 Bishop Street to facilitate the construction of a new purpose-built community facility by Autumn 2012.

New contact details for the interim accommodation cannot be confirmed as yet but until further notice please continue to use the details in the right-hand panel.

It is unlikely that email or website information will change but any updates will be notified as early as possible.

NWCN's 2011-2012 Membership Renewal will take place as soon as we are installed in the new accommodation – please do not hesitate to submit your membership renewal (and Executive Committee nomination) but wait for further updates before sending payment by cheque.

NWCN Membership Form 2011-12

To become a member of North-West Community Network for the year 2011/12, please complete the form below and return to the Network with your £10/€13 membership fee.

****Membership is only open to community/voluntary organisations****

Your Organisation:

Name Of Organisation:	_____
Named Contact(s) & Designation:	_____
Address:	_____
	Postcode: _____
Telephone:	Fax: _____
Email(s):	_____
Website:	_____
Brief Description Of Organisation's Role & Activities:	_____

Please make your cheque payable to North-West Community Network, or contact the Network if you wish to make payment in another way.

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North-West Community Network

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**PESP Officers:
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Martin McCrystal**

Network Update is sent electronically to those groups for whom the Network has a reliable email address.

This supports the Network's sustainability efforts, both fiscal and environmental.

Please feel free to circulate the document and/or to encourage groups not currently in receipt of Network Update to contact us and therefore ensure future inclusion.

**Network Update
Spring 2011**